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ABSTRACT

The report presents findings of a December 1983 survey of procedures used in 24 local Oklahoma school districts to identify and place learning disabled (LD) students. The survey intended to identify various eligibility criteria and placement practices and to disseminate findings to educational decisionmakers at the state and local levels. Data are presented in table form and include the responses of each of the 24 districts to questions regarding past and current practices, including additional evaluation techniques beyond those outlined in state standards. Each response lists the local contact person and that person's findings or impressions. Responses touch on such practices as additional diagnostic testing, use of the 50% discrepancy formula, and informal as well as formal evaluation considerations. (CL)

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A Survey Of Current Placement Practices And Eligibility Criteria For The LEARNING DISABLED CHILD In Oklahoma

Oklahoma
State Department of Education
Leslie Fisher, State Superintendent

1984

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INTRODUCTION

During the past few years there has been a resurgence of the question, "What criteria should be used to accurately identify students with specific learning disabilities?" In Oklahoma, as in many other states, school personnel are experiencing problems and expressing concern about accurately identifying and classifying children with suspected learning disabilities.

This survey is a response to questions generated and concerns expressed by Oklahoma educators and parent advocacy groups concerning eligibility and placement criteria for children with suspected learning disabilities.

This is not an attempt to determine the extent of agreement and/or disagreement among school districts as to eligibility criteria and placement practices. The purpose is two-fold: 1) To identify local school districts' various eligibility criteria and placement practices in the area of Learning Disabilities, and 2) To develop a report and disseminate it to education decision-makers at the local and state levels in Oklahoma. However, the overall goal is to provide additional factual information which will facilitate the current dialogue occurring among education decision-makers concerning eligibility criteria and placement procedures for children suspected of learning disabilities.

The survey letter was mailed by the State Department of Education in early December 1983 and the responses were received in early January 1984. Participants in the survey were Directors of Special Services or their designee. The return rate was approximately forty percent (40%) of those surveyed. The results of the survey were analyzed and prepared by C. D. Jones, Jr., Assistant Administrator, Special Education Section, State Department of Education. The State Department of Education acknowledges each of the respondents and appreciates their time and concern.

Dr. C. D. Jones, Jr.
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Special Education Section

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
1.0 Bixby Public Schools Sharon S. Vereyken Director, Special Services Post Office Box 160 Bixby, OK 74008	1.0 If the initial evaluation indicates a fairly severe deficit in any academic area and an average IQ, the LD and/or Speech Pathology teachers do additional diagnostic testing and observation. The counselors observe the child in the regular classroom. The eligibility team examines all testing reports for evidence of a 50% deficit between expected and actual achievement level. The team also looks for evidence of processing deficits. A child is identified for LD only if there is a severe discrepancy (close to or above 50% level) in written language, reading or math. The team tries to put all evidence together and make an appropriate decision for those cases which fall in the borderline area of discrepancy at about the 35-50% level. If the case shows clear evidence of processing problems, the child may be placed in an LD lab, especially if remedial programs and other interventions have been ineffective. 1.1 If the test results and observations do not support an hypothesis of processing problems and the deficit is 35-50%, the child would usually not be placed and the team would recommend other interventions. (Cont)	1.0 Some changes in the referral process are under consideration. These changes were inspired by the new guide, "Serving the LD Child in Oklahoma." The changes are: 1) Pre-referral committees in each building. These committees would be charged with making the decision as to whether a child should be referred for formal testing; review the cumulative record and Otis Lennon test; make sure remedial programs have been utilized; suggest regular classroom program modifications; counseling, etc.; and document the pre-referral interventions. 2) A pre-referral form or checklist which teachers would use to document interventions tried. This would become a part of the referral if one still seems indicated. 3) Developing some informal inventories which teachers could give to help prescribe for the child within the regular classroom. These would be included in the referral if one later became necessary.

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
Bixby Public Schools Sharon S. Vereyken	Any severe delays in oral language would be treated with speech/language programming. A severe delay in listening comprehension without severe delay in other academic areas would be treated with auditory programs in the speech therapy program and/or prescriptive suggestions to the regular teacher, parent and student. In cases where a resolution is not apparent, the LEA leans toward a conservative approach and leaves the child in the LRE with some prescriptive suggestions.	

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LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
2.0 Canadian Valley Cooperative Sherri Woodham, Director Purcell Public Schools 919 North 9th Street Purcell, OK 73080	2.0 Past Practices Elementary (K-4): $\frac{\text{IQ x Years in School}}{100}$ Middle: (5-8): $\frac{\text{IQ x Years in School}}{100}$ High School(9-12): Not Known 2.1 Current Practices Elementary (K-4): Same as above. Additionally, classroom performance is considered. Middle: (5-8): Both the determinant IQ and the 50% discrepancy formulas are applied and compared to actual functioning in the classroom and to standardized group achievement test results, if available. High School(9-12): Consideration is given to the 50% discrepancy, but placement is not usually made unless academic scores are below the intermediate level (grades 4 and 5).	2.0 Past Practices allowed too many students to qualify for lab placement who could have functioned in the regular classroom. 2.1 Current Practices are limiting placement to approximately 5% and appear to be serving those students who are unable to function in the regular academic program. Most educators and parents are pleased with the results of these placement practices. Elementary (K-4): If reading is the only discrepant area and is a minor discrepancy, placement is made first in remedial reading. Minor curriculum adjustment in the regular classroom is tried before LD placement is considered.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

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3.0 Carnegie Public Schools Ann Morris Federal Programs Director Post Office Box 159 Carnegie, OK 73015	3.0 Carnegie Public Schools has used and is currently using placement practices in the area of learning disabilities as outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982. Alternative placements and techniques are attempted prior to extensive testing for placement in Special Education.	3.0 Carnegie experiences difficulty in placing students within one week of their enrollment: a) students who do not hand-carry testing and placement information from their former school; b) frequently neither students nor parents inform school of prior Special Education placement; c) requested records may not be received for several weeks and are often incomplete. 3.1 IF aware that the child was receiving Special Education services, attempts are made to place the child on a 30 day temporary IEP or until the testing and placement data has been received. 3.2 Requests copy of the 50% discrepancy formula.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

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4.0 Special Services Cooperative Marilyn Wells, Director Wilson School 1141 East Cherry Cushing, OK 74023	4.0 Based on a mini survey and LEA procedures to determine LD eligibility, the following points are taken into consideration: 1) Severe discrepancy between expected and achieved levels of functioning. 2) Marked scatter in the scaled scores on the WISC-R. 3) Significant discrepancy in verbal and performance IQ scores. 4) Team override must also be an option for or against LD placement. The reason for the override option is that the team knows the child on a daily basis and in considering the test data or need for further testing can make the decision in the best interest of the child.	4.0 Learning Disabilities, as in any other category of Special Education, has ranges of severity within the group. Based on past experience, approximately 25% were in the severe range of LD. The rest of the class consisted of moderate to mild LD. This is probably typical of most LD classes. The mild LD cases are the ones which there seems to be such a dilemma regarding placement, but as in other categories, if the child's best interest is at heart, the placement should be the least restrictive and most appropriate educational environment.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
5.0 Dover Public Schools Teresa Loudermilk Box 195 Dover, OK 73734	5.0 Dover has some general guidelines such as "potentially normal" intelligence and "significant discrepancy", and also takes into consideration what is best for the child. The significant discrepancy is not a 50% discrepancy formula. The criteria for learning disability placement is strictly individualized. The team convenes and evaluates all information to determine if the student will actually be better educated in an LD class. Dover has a pretty low count because of this practice. The belief is that it is best for the student to stay in regular class as much as possible. If further testing is indicated: Give or examine recent standardized achievement tests to determine if the student is significantly below grade level. Give as many achievement tests as you can! One is hardly enough to determine if a student is achieving or not. Significantly below grade level is: Kindergarten.....PP Level or below 1st grade.....K Level or below 2nd grade.....1.0 Level or below 3rd grade.....1.5 Level or below (Cont)	5.0 Dover has no non-readers in grades 2-12 except for those who have moved in from other schools during the school year.

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
Dover Public Schools Teresa Loudermilk	4th grade.....2.0 Level or below 5th grade.....2.5 Level or below 6th grade.....3.0 Level or below 7th & 8th grade.....4.0 Level or below 9th through 12th.....6.0 Level or below Any classroom teacher should be able and prepared to work with students that are no more below grade level than listed above. All testing from other schools is re-evaluated and students are not put into Special Education because he/she had been in such a class at another district.	

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
6.0 Enid Public Schools Colleen Nixon, Director Special Education 500 South Independence Enid, OK 73701	6.0 The current practice is to use only the forms established by the SDE pertaining to placement practices in the area of learning disabilities. 6.1 The 50% discrepancy formula is also being used. This is most beneficial in helping to determine placement.	6.0 Training workshops are being conducted on how to work with the slow learner in the regular classroom. The workshops have been most beneficial to teachers and students. This has changed the LD classes back to having only LD students in our resource rooms.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
7.0 Ft. Gibson Public Schools Dale Mashburn Post Office Box 280 Ft. Gibson, OK 74434	7.0 The LEA makes every effort to adhere to the procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982.	7.0 Do not employ the 50% discrepancy formula.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
8.0 Hobart Public Schools Emilie Krieger, Director Special Services 321 North Jefferson Post Office Box 899 Hobart, OK 73651	8.0 These procedures are used by the five-school Coop for LD placement: In addition to policies set forth by the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, each student being considered for LD placement must meet the following criteria: The student must have a severe discrepancy between achievement and ability, and at least 6 of 10 WISC-R subtest scores $\geq$ 7; and at least 1 of 10 WISC-R subtest scores $\leq$4; and either or both VIQ and PIQ $\geq$ 85; or the student must have a severe discrepancy between achievement and ability; and have $\geq$ 15 points discrepancy between WISC-R, VIQ and PIQ; and either or both VIQ and PIQ $\geq$ 85. Severe discrepancy will mean at least one 50% discrepancy or two or more 40% discrepancies. _____ x .50 = _____ (or) Expected Achievement — 50% Discrepancy _____ x .40 = _____ Expected Achievement — 40% Discrepancy Exceptions to this criteria require specific documentation on the LD eligibility form to state the basis for this placement.	8.0 LEA did not feel it could make the change to age-equivalent scores at this time. However, would like to in the future. The LEA is pleased with its policies; believes it is a more objective way to eliminate slow learners from LD programs and provide more concrete information for placement teams.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
9.0 Jenks Public Schools Mary S. Lemmond Director, Special Services First & B Streets Jenks, OK 74037	9.0 Following multi-disciplinary testing, using a wide variety of tests and classroom observations, a team staffing is held. Site based teams review all data. Staff psychometrists are an integral part of the team.	
	9.1 LEA uses a 50% discrepancy formula as only one part of the placement decision process. $\frac{\text{F.S. IQ} \times \text{N.Y.S.}}{100} \times .5$	9.1 LEA psychometrists feel that explaining "expectancy" to parents and regular teachers has been a very positive move.
	9.2 LEA uses team override when the team determines the LD placement is appropriate.	9.2 Are now developing a Teacher Consultant program to aid regular teachers whose students have been tested but do not qualify for Special Education placement.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
10.0 Lawton Public Schools Anna Claire Kuchta Associate Administrator Special Education Special Service Center Lawton, OK 73502	10.0 These guidelines for LD placement are used in conjunction with state procedures set forth in the SDE 1982 Manual. Multiple Criteria for Team Consideration for Determining Existence of a Specific LD. The team may determine that a child has a specific learning disability if the conditions in paragraphs 1) and 2) below are satisfied: 1) The child does not achieve commensurate with his/her age and ability levels in one or more of the areas listed below when provided with learning experiences appropriate for the child's age and ability levels: the ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do math calculations. 2) The team finds that a child has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, mathematical calculation or mathematics reasoning. Severe discrepancy formula: $\frac{\text{F.S. IQ} \times \text{N.Y.S.}}{100} = \text{Expected Grade Level} \times .5$ 3) The team further may determine that a child has a specific learning disability if the team can document that the results of applying the discrepancy formula is not a true identification of the functioning ability of the student, and that the student is function- (Cont)	10.0 It remains the position of our superintendent's staff that a statewide definition of "severe discrepancy" is needed. Lawton Public Schools undertook its own study of the state committee's recommendations and with minor revisions adopted for district use: Multiple Criteria for Team Consideration for Determining Existence of a Specific Learning Disability.

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
Lawton Public Schools Anna Claire Kuchta	ing at a level based upon the testing material and other documentation provided to the team, which satisfies the team that irrespective of the formula set out above or any other criteria herein provided, there is in fact a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability in one or more of the pertinent areas, and as a result said child may then be classified as having a specific learning disability. 10.1 The team MAY NOT identify a child as having a specific learning disability if the severe discrepancy between ability and achievement is primarily the result of: 1) a visual, hearing or motor handicap; 2) mental retardation; 3) emotional disturbance; or 4) environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage. Factors could include: a) excessive absenteeism b) excessive family mobility c) English as secondary language of the home.	

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
11.0 Lloyd Rader Children's Diagnostic Center Roger L. Conway Acting Superintendent Route 4, Box 9 Sand Springs, OK 74063	11.0 The L.E. Rader Center incorporates the following additional information from the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982: a) Kaufman Analysis of the WISC-R b) Eligibility Statement c) Intelligence Quotient within the Average Range d) Review Previous LD Placement Placement decisions are made by the IEP team. Consideration of the test data relative to the four additional criteria are our main criteria for placement.	11.0 Only true LD students are served in an LD classroom. Slow learners receive remedial assistance through other educational programs at the Center.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
12.0 Midwest City/Del City Schools William Shadrick Special Services Coordinator Post Office Box 10630 Midwest City, OK 73140	12.0 Past Practices Prior to 1979, if IQ score ruled out retardation, and achievement was below grade expectancy, LD placement was considered. Four years ago, the LEA determined that children who were achieving below 65% of expectancy in one or more of the 7 academic functions should be considered LD and referred to the LD eligibility team for consideration.	12.0 There was a great inconsistency from site to site; and possible processing deficits were not always considered.
	12.1 Current Practices In August of 1982 the LEA determined a severe discrepancy existed if a child was achieving at or below 50% of expectancy based on the Walraven Chart. The LEA continued to use grade scores supplied by the test publishers.	12.1 In August of 1983 the LEA reviewed its procedures and eligibility requirements for LD placement and determined that they should not only update their test battery, but the use of grade scores as well.
	12.2 The LEA guidelines (1983) for LD eligibility teams are that one standard deviation discrepancy between ability and achievement is "severe". The team must then determine if the discrepancy is a result of sensory or motor handicap, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage and if there is evidence of a processing deficit. The present test battery may include, but is not limited to, the WISC-R, Bender, Visual Aural Digit Span Test, WRAT, PIAT and the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho Educational Battery.	12.2 The LEA seriously considered the advantages and disadvantages of percentile scores, standard scores, T scores, Z scores, and NCE scores. The LEA believed that NCE scores have the greatest value for the district. Further, the LEA determined that by converting all scores to NCE scores, significant discrepancies would be readily visible to all persons who must use test scores.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
13.0 Moore Public Schools Dr. Leon Bewley Director of Special Services 400 North Broadway Moore, OK 73160	13.0 Past Practices Three years ago Moore was using a 35% discrepancy between ability and achievement for the placement of students in LD programs. 13.1 Current Practices Moore has decided to begin using Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) scores in the determination of severe discrepancy. "Severe discrepancy" would be defined as 21 points between ability and achievement. To determine this, IQ scores would be converted to an NCE score. Likewise, achievement scores would also be converted to NCE scores. To be eligible, a student's achievement/NCE score would have to be at least 21 points below his/her IQ/NCE score.	13.0 Past Practices This practice was dropped when it was challenged by the State Department of Education. Since that time, no specific criteria has been used. 13.1 Current Practices At this time, Moore has a study committee working to establish a new criteria. Although the committee has not completed its work, it has been decided to recommend the use of NCE scores in the determination of severe discrepancy.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
14.0 Muskogee City Schools Jackie Chaffin, Coordinator Services for Exceptional Children Education Center 570 North 6th Muskogee, OK 74401	14.0 Muskogee follows the procedures in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982 for identifying learning disabled students. 14.1 The 50% discrepancy formula is also used as one criteria. The LEA also checks the relationship that the Woodcock-Johnson has to the WISC-R, to determine if the levels of learning match, or if a severe discrepancy exists. The local RESC administers the Kaufman ABC test to Muskogee LEA students who appear to be LD. The test gives the LEA a more accurate evaluation. The local RESC also administers the Durrell-Analysis of Reading Difficulty, Bender, Wepman, and a language evaluation on anyone indicated having language problems.	14.0 LD students are so hard to identify that even with the mass information, some are probably missed. The Special Education Consultant has been of great help. The Consultant makes home visits if there is any indication that the child's learning problems are environmental, but have no data to prove it. The Consultant writes a report and submits it to the Counselor.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
15.0 Mustang Public Schools Melba Case, Coordinator Special Services Mustang, OK 73064	15.0 Mustang is following the draft proposal of the LD guidelines of 50% discrepancy. 15.1 Mustang also looks for potential for normal intelligence, although this is not a mandated guideline. 15.2 Pre-referral is on an informal basis.	15.0 Counselors in the Mustang School have been given intensive in-service training on identifying LD students. A determined effort has been made to keep the LD program from being a "dumping ground" for borderline and slow learners. Child Count 12-1-83: 3.1% LD If schools apply the 50% discrepancy, there should be a back-up in the regular curriculum to serve the slow learner. Mustang has remedial reading labs 3-12, and Chapter I remedial math lab 3-5. Next year's plans include Chapter I remedial math 6-8. A concern is the lack of a State Mandated Program so that an LD student identified in one district can move to another district and still be eligible using the same criteria (i.e., 50% discrepancy formula).

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
16.0 Norman Public Schools Phil DeBerry, Director Special Services 131 South Flood Norman, OK 73069	16.0 Guidelines for Determining LD Norman Public Schools has adopted procedures for identifying children with learning disabilities. These procedures incorporate the definition set forth by the Federal & OSDE. The definition reads: "Specific learning disability" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain disfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage. 16.1 The guidelines further state that a severe discrepancy must exist between achievement and ability in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skill, reading comprehension, mathematics calculations and mathematics reasoning. 16.2 Norman Public Schools makes the determination for eligibility for LD through informal and formal evaluation. The evaluation will be a multi-disciplinary approach. (Cont)	

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
Norman Public Schools Phil DeBerry, Director	The following may be included in each initial evaluation of a child suspected of having a learning disability: an individual educational battery, an individualized intellectual evaluation, a speech and language evaluation, and a hearing and visual examination. 16.3 A 50% discrepancy will be used for the determination of a severe discrepancy. Determination for placement in LD programs will be considered by an eligibility team if a student shows a severe discrepancy in one or more of the seven areas.	16.3 Norman Schools also has allowed the eligibility team an override provision of the 50% discrepancy... If, when the 50% is applied, the child has no discrepancies but the team agrees the child does, indeed, need placement, they may decide to place the child anyway. The district has had no problems in the application of the 50% discrepancy. It is the district's feeling that the 50% is eliminating those students who need remediation, not LD. It seems to be doing what the district thought it would. Child Count in LD went from 305 on 12-1-82 to 292 on 12-1-83.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
17.0 Oklahoma City Public Schools Wyolene Brown Coordinator, Assessment 900 North Klein Oklahoma City, OK 73106	17.0 Past Practices The Office of Assessment, Oklahoma City Public Schools, did not define a "severe discrepancy" for the school year 1981-82. 17.1 Current Practices Changed past procedure and began to use the 50% discrepancy formula for the school years 1982-83 and 1983-84.	17.0 Concern about the 50% discrepancy caused a procedural change in assessment. 17.1 At the present time, neither procedure for placement can be seriously defended or preferred. The only significance that can be mentioned at this particular time is that percentages continue to increase for LD. (See chart below)

	1981-82	1982-83 50% Discrepancy	1983-84 (1st Quarter) 50% Discrepancy
Total of new Special Education Students	1,427	1,385	355
Total of new Learning Disabilities Students	814	816	215
Percentage of new Special Education Students who were eligible for Learning Disabilities	57%	59%	60.5%

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
18.0 Owasso Public Schools Lynn Johnson, Director Special Services Owasso, OK 74055	18.0 The LEA follows guidelines outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, as well as those suggested in the new publication, Serving the LD Child in Oklahoma. 18.1 The LEA also considers "severe discrepancy" as one of several factors in the decision to place, although placement is not based on discrepancy alone. The Owasso LEA teams try carefully to scrutinize all information pertaining to each child in determining appropriate placement.	18.0 Regarding the records of students who transfer to Owasso from other LEAs: there appears to be a great deal of variation in placement practices across the state. Any additional study done in this area to help LEAs become more consistent would be greatly appreciated.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
19.0 Ponca City Public Schools Dr. Joe Robert Surber Director, Special Services Post Office Drawer 271 Ponca City, OK 74602	19.0 In addition to the procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, (pp 21-24), as part of the overall assessment, the school's team uses the 50% discrepancy formula. The discrepancy formula is used only as one tool in assessing the truly LD student from the remedial or very low ability student. This is useful in the decision making process. 19.1 The team has the right to "override" and in many instances do feel that the child is LD even though the 50% is not met. Also, when only a few "tenths" of a grade level is involved, error is considered. The LEA feels this is useful.	19.0 The LEA has seen no appreciable drop in eligible LD students. In fact, the December 1, 1983 count compared to 1982 witnessed an increase of LD students. However, the LEA expressed confidence in believing that these, for the most part, are more likely to be 1) true LD students, and 2) have a disability of a severe nature requiring Special Education services.

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20.0 Sand Springs Public Schools Dr. Lee Rand Smith Director, Special Education and Federal Projects Sand Springs, OK 74063	20.0 The LEA follows the prescribed state guidelines to the best of its ability. The LEA psychologist administers a variety of approved instruments to determine abilities or disabilities in the areas of intelligence, information processing, perception and academic function. Teachers, counselors, parents and administrators are consulted and involved in the determination of eligibility. They are reconvened for the placement meeting and the IEP preparation. 20.1 Depending on grade level, the Sand Springs LEA fluctuates between a minus 2 Standard Deviation (S.D.) and severe discrepancy model in determining eligibility. As the student's grade placement approaches secondary, these procedures are adjusted to accommodate individual differences.	20.0 - 20.1 Due to the present and projected funding problems for all programs, it appears that several deserving students may not be adequately served in the future. It may be necessary to modify the evaluation and placement procedures. LEA faculty is taking an active role in supporting additional funding possibilities in education.

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21.0 Sapulpa Public Schools Sheila W. Chaney, Director Special Services 1 South Mission Sapulpa, OK 74066	21.0 These are the criteria currently used: a)"Severe discrepancy" between expected level (as determined by highest IQ on WISC-R) and actual level of achievement in 7 basic areas. It should be determined that the discrepancy is not correctable without Special Education. An override of this criterion can be used by the team for a variety of reasons. b) Positive indications of processing disorders found in test results and behavioral observations. c) Determination that the discrepancy in achievement is primarily due to processing deficits rather than cultural or environmental factors, lack or kind of instruction, physical disability, generally low mental ability or retardation, or emotional disturbance. 21.1 Differences between our current practices and those of several years ago are these: a) Increased emphasis on "severe discrepancy". b) Expectancy based on highest IQ on WISC-R to avoid "penalizing" LD students with significant differences between verbal and nonverbal abilities. c) Increased emphasis on indications of processing problems as opposed to deficits due to generalized lowered ability, environmental, cultural, or instructional factors. d) Use of referral screening teams as the initial step in the referral process.	21.0 Since some of these practices have been put into effect this year, it is too early to evaluate the outcome. An early impression is that the success of the referral team is highly dependent upon the team chairman.

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LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
22.0 Tulsa Public Schools Dr. George Truka Director, Special Education 3027 South New Haven Post Office Box 470208 Tulsa, OK 74147	22.0 The Tulsa Public Schools have generally followed the guidelines outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, published by SDE.	22.0 These guidelines are an acceptable criterion to be used by the placement teams. However, it has been the team's prerogative to deviate from these guidelines when they perceive it as being in the best interest of the student.
	22.1 In many instances, the child having more than a 50% discrepancy has not been placed and in other instances, the student with less than a 50% discrepancy has been categorized and placed.	22.1 Hard criterion for the placement is very difficult to formulate due to the multiplicity of variable factors intertwined in the makeup of the LD child. At the present time, 6.4% of the student body receive some type of LD instruction. This percentage is too great, but when the criteria of "potentially average or above intelligence" was removed, these numbers escalated.

Past/Current Placement Practices Regarding Learning Disabilities In addition to procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Special Education in Oklahoma 1982, are there other methods/techniques used such as the 50% discrepancy formula? If so, which ones? What are your findings using these additional evaluation techniques?

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
23.0 Watonga Public Schools Melba B. Goerke Coordinator, Special Projects Post Office Box 310 Watonga, OK 73772	23.0 Watonga uses a discrepancy formula as one criteria for learning disabilities eligibility. A "severe discrepancy" is defined as a difference of 50% or more between the child's estimated ability and his/her actual achievement level in one or more of the 7 areas (oral expression, listening comprehension, etc.) as measured by standardized tests. A "severe discrepancy" is determined as follows: $\frac{\text{F.S. IQ} \times \text{N.Y.S.}}{100} = \text{Expected Grade Level} \times .5$	23.0 The eligibility team looks at the child through the eyes of each person on the team, the discrepancy formula is but one criterion.
	23.1 Watonga School has had a written policy since 1980, similar to the pre-referral system set out in the new LD Manual.	23.1 A local policies and procedures manual became a necessity when our LD labs reached the maximum and students continued to be referred at an alarming rate (especially K-2). A belief that this was due to several reasons including the following: a) a new definition of LD in which intelligence was eliminated, b) the elimination of the "potentially" normal IQ opened the door to the placement of many slow learners in the LD programs, c) lack of sophistication in the area of LD on the part of members of the eligibility teams regarding the interpretation of test results, criteria for eligibility.

(Cont)

LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
Watonga Public Schools Melba B. Goerke	23.2 This criteria has enabled the LEA to review placements and place some students into remedial programs when it is felt they can be more appropriately served. This lowers the caseload of the LD teacher, who can now devote all his/her time to the students identified as LD.	23.2 The LD population in the school system had been from 3 to 5%. After the implementation of PL 94-142 and the removal of "normal or potentially normal IQ" as part of the LD definition, the LD count rose in 1979-80 even though total child count dropped. Teachers had begun to refer a greater number of students for evaluation, and with no strict LD eligibility guidelines or criteria to follow, placement became almost synonymous with referral. Due to the large increase in LD placement in 1980, the LEA felt a need for at least a uniform pre-referral system which would cause school personnel to take a more in-depth look at each student before (or instead of) referral. The pre-referral system brought the LEA LD population back from approximately 8% to approximately 5%. However, since the Spring of 1983, the Special Ed Coordinator has been making all observations of students referred and acting as a member of each eligibility team in order to provide consistent input regarding expectations, discrepancies, etc. Consequently, the LD population of Watonga Schools is now at approximately 3%. Watonga continues to use the pre-referral system, a 50% discrepancy, and relies heavily upon input from the members of the eligibility team.

School Year	Child Count	LD	% LD
1978-1979	189	66	5%
1979-1980	175	82	8%
*1980-1981	169	59	5%
1981-1982	162	58	5%
**1982-1983	147	52	5%
**1983-1984	106	32	3%

*School Policies and Procedures Manual written
**Special Education Coordinator member of all eligibility teams

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LEA/Contact Person	LEA Response	Findings/Impressions of LEA Contact Person
24.0 Yukon Public Schools Dolly Barr Director, Special Education 1025 South 11th Yukon, OK 73099	24.0 Yukon follows the P.L. 94-142 regulations and state policies and procedures for placement in LD classes. 24.1 Yukon uses the 50% discrepancy formula as proposed by the draft, "Guidelines for Learning Disabilities Placement - State of Oklahoma." The placement teams are not giving too much leeway to new referrals without use of the override suggested in the draft indicated above. 24.2 A pre-referral is used at the elementary only and for students who have had no testing (other than screening). The pre-referral is not mandatory but strongly suggested.	24.0 24.1 The 50% discrepancy formula is used as a guideline. It is not strictly adherred to in the case of retests for students who have been in LD classes. The December 1* Child Count, unofficial, for LD population is approximately 2.9% of the school population. The guidelines in the new publication, "Serving the Learning Disabled Child in Oklahoma", should be made mandatory for the state of Oklahoma. *1983